



Registering and Voting in Michigan



August Primary:
Tuesday,
August 3, 2004



November
General Election:
Tuesday,
November 2, 2004



Secretary of State
Terri Lynn Land

www.michigan.gov/sos

Dear friends,

Before you can vote in any election, you must be registered. Once you have registered you may exercise your right to vote, either by appearing at the polls or obtaining an absentee ballot. The procedures for registering to vote and participating in elections are explained in this brochure.

Citizen participation in the electoral process is critical to the health of our democracy. Do your part: Register and vote!



★ TO REGISTER ★

To register to vote you must be ...

- ★ a U.S. citizen;
- ★ at least 18 years of age by election day;
- ★ a resident of Michigan and the city or township where you are applying to register to vote.

Where. You can register to vote for federal, state, and local elections by mail; at your county, city, or township clerk's office; or by visiting any Secretary of State branch office.

In addition, specified agencies providing services through the Family Independence Agency, the Department of Community Health and the Department



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of Career Development offer voter registration services to their clients. Military recruitment centers also provide voter registration services.

When. You must register at least 30 days before the election. This gives the clerk time to process the forms and send you a Voter Identification Card.

Whenever you move to a new city or township, you must re-register to vote.

How. If you move within a city or township, you must update your address. This can be handled through your local clerk, at a Secretary of State branch office, by mail or at any other location where voter registrations are accepted. Michigan voters must use the same residential address for voter registration and driver's license purposes. Consequently, if you submit a driver's license address change, it will be applied to your voter registration. Similarly, if you submit a voter registration address change, it will be applied to your driver's license.

First-time voter. If you have never voted in Michigan and register by mail, you must appear in person to vote in the first election in which you wish to participate. This requirement does not apply if (1) you personally hand deliver the mail-in registration form to your county, city or township clerk's office instead of mailing the form (2) you are 60 years of age or more (3) you are disabled or (4) you are eligible to vote under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act.

If you have never voted in Michigan and register by mail, you may also be subject to a new identification requirement provided under federal law. The identification requirement is explained on the mail-in registration form.

Outside the U.S. If you are temporarily outside the U.S., you may use a Federal Postcard Application (FPCA) form to register. The FPCA forms are distributed through U.S. embassies and military bases. A Michigan resident who moves and registers out of state may not re-register to vote in Michigan until he or she reestablishes residency here.

You may also register at the same time you renew your driver's license by mail. Eligible drivers receive a voter registration application in the mail with their driver's license renewal information.

★ TO VOTE ★

To vote, simply appear at your assigned polling place on election day. The polls are open from 7 a.m. until 8 p.m.

Where. Your Voter Identification Card lists your precinct number and your assigned polling place location. If you do not receive a Voter Identification Card within three weeks after registering, contact your city or township clerk's office to confirm your registration status.

Absentee Ballots. Absentee ballots are available for all elections. You may vote by absentee ballot if:

- ★ you are unable to attend the polls without assistance;

- ★ you are 60 years of age or older;
- ★ you expect to be absent from your city or township for the entire time the polls are open on election day;
- ★ you are in jail, awaiting arraignment or trial;
- ★ you have been assigned to work as a precinct inspector in a precinct other than where you are registered; or
- ★ you are unable to attend the polls because of religious beliefs.

If any of these situations exist, you can obtain an absentee ballot by writing your city or township clerk. You must state the reason why you need an absentee ballot and you must sign the request. A pre-printed absentee ballot application form is available from your city or township clerk upon request.

Outside the U.S. A Federal Postcard Application (FPCA) can also be used to apply for an absentee ballot if you are temporarily outside the U.S. The FPCA must be signed under oath unless you, your spouse, or your parents are serving in the armed forces or Merchant Marines.

Send the completed application to your city or township clerk for federal, state, city and township elections. Send the application to your school district for school elections and your village clerk for village elections.

If you want the ballot mailed, your application must be received by 2 p.m. the Saturday before the election. Make your request early to allow for delivery time.

A voter eligible to vote by absentee ballot may also vote in person at the clerk's office anytime up to 4 p.m. the day before the election.

All absentee ballots must be received by the clerk's office no later than 8 p.m. on election day.

If you know before the primary that you will be unable to vote in person at the general election, you may request absentee ballots for both elections at the same time.

Emergency Absentee Ballots. You may be eligible for an emergency absentee ballot if a family death or illness requires you to leave your community on election day, or you are unable to attend the polls because of personal illness or accident.

The emergency must have occurred late enough that you could not file a regular absentee ballot request. Have someone deliver your written request for an emergency absentee ballot to the clerk's office before 4 p.m. on election day.

Emergency ballots must be returned by 8 p.m. on election day.

★ DISABLED VOTERS ★

Accessibility. Federal and state laws require every city and township to provide accessible registration and voting locations for voters who are disabled.

If you require voting assistance, ask the election workers for help; a reason for the needed assistance does not have to be stated. Two inspectors will assist you in the voting station. An elector who is blind, disabled, or unable to read or write may be assisted with his or her ballot by any person of the voter's choice, except the following: the voter's employer or agent of that employer, or an officer or agent of a union to which the voter belongs.

For more information, contact your city or township clerk. Hearing-impaired residents may contact the Bureau of Elections at (517) 241-4320 (TTY).

★ 2004 ELECTION DATES ★

July 6	Last day to register for August Primary
July 31	August Primary absentee ballot requests must be received by 2 p.m.
August 3	AUGUST PRIMARY
October 4	Last day to register for November General Election
October 30	November General Election absentee ballot requests must be received by 2 p.m.
November 2	NOVEMBER GENERAL ELECTION

★ MORE INFORMATION ★

For more information visit the Secretary of State's Web site at:
www.Michigan.gov/sos

The following features may be of interest:

- **Voter Information Center:** Allows voters to confirm their registration status, obtain information on the location of their polling place, link to candidate Web sites and obtain other election-related information.
- **Citizens' Guide to Voting Systems:** Provides complete instructions on operating the voting equipment used in your jurisdiction to conduct elections.
- **Campaign Finance Statements Online:** Offers access to the reports and data filed by candidates, PACs, and political organizations to disclose their campaign finances.
- **Michigan Electronic Voter Guide 2004:** Available after the August Primary, the guide provides full information on the state level candidates, political parties, and state proposals appearing on the November General Election ballot.

The Department of State is an equal opportunity employer and service provider. If you need an accommodation or have been denied service, telephone (517) 373-7159 or TTY (517) 241-4320.

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